

What Is Cardiac Nuclear Imaging?

Cardiac nuclear imaging is also called a **perfusion scan**. It's a way of checking blood flow through the muscle (or walls) of the heart. To do this, a **tracer** (a small amount of radioactive matter) is delivered into the bloodstream. Then a camera scans the tracer in the blood as it flows through the heart muscle. The tracer leaves your body within hours. This test can be done in a hospital or test center.

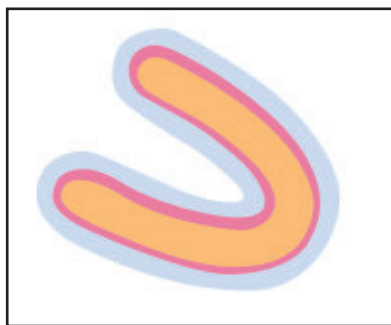


Illustration of a normal scan. This shows the heart muscle is getting enough blood.

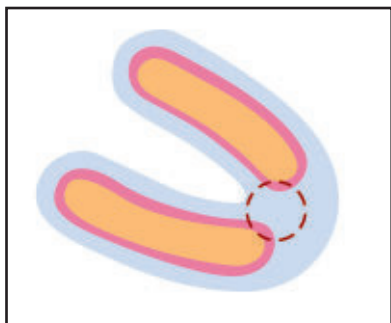


Illustration of an abnormal scan. The area within the circle shows heart muscle that is not getting enough blood.

Your Test Results

Your doctor will discuss the test results with you when they are ready. The results help you and your doctor plan treatment or further testing, if needed. Be sure to address any questions or concerns you have with your doctor.



Consultant:

Catherine A. Chimenti, MD,
FACC, Cardiology

With contributions by:

Frederick E. Kuhn, MD,
Cardiology

C. Templeman, CNMT

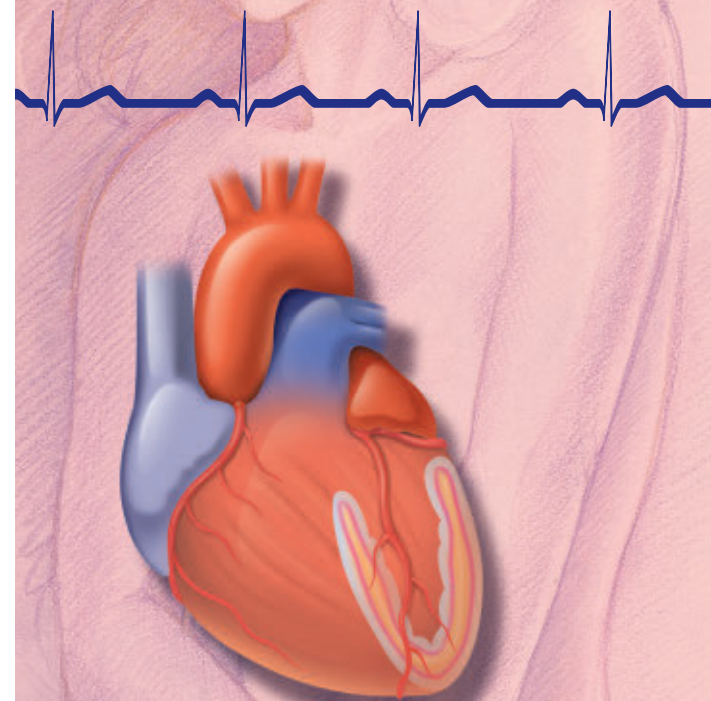
This brochure is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care.

©1997, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2016 Krames, LLC.
All rights reserved. Made in the USA.

Krames
www.kramesstore.com
800.333.3032

Krames

CARDIAC NUCLEAR IMAGING



Tracking Blood Flow
Through Your Heart Muscle

Before Your Test

Try to arrive for your test a little early. Although you will exercise for just a short while, the entire test will take a few hours. For best results, prepare for the test as directed.

- When you schedule the test, be sure to mention all the medications you take. This includes over-the-counter medications, herbal remedies, and supplements. Ask if you should stop taking any of them the day of the test.
- Stop eating and drinking before the test as directed. You may also need to avoid caffeine and stop smoking for a certain amount of time before the test.
- On the day of the test, wear a two-piece outfit, top and bottoms. Also wear comfortable walking shoes for the test.



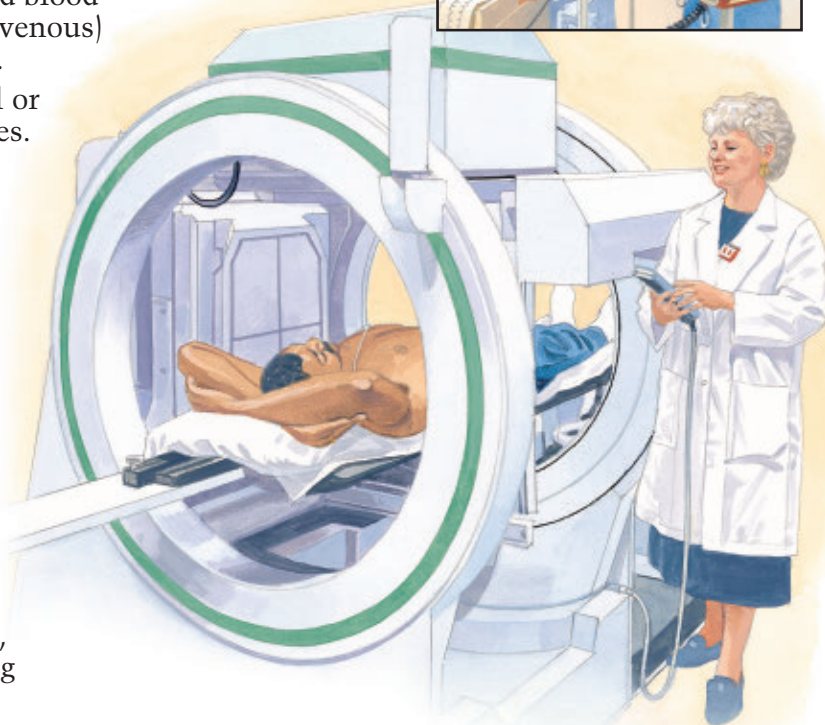
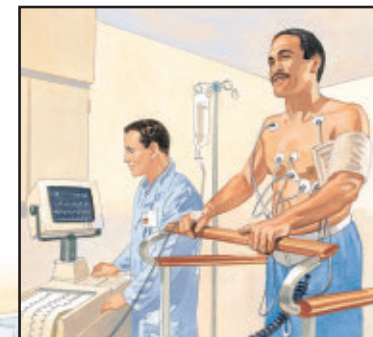
Let the Technologist Know

- What medications you take.
- If you have any allergies.
- About any health problems you have or have had in the past. These include heart attack, stroke, knee or hip problems, arthritis, diabetes, asthma, and chronic lung disease.
- If you are pregnant, think you might be, or are breastfeeding.

During Your Test

You may be asked to change into a hospital gown for the test. At some point, scanning pictures will be taken while you rest. This may be done before you exercise. Or, you might have to return for resting scans later that day or a different day. During the actual test:

- You will be attached to EKG and blood pressure monitors. An IV (intravenous) line will be started in your arm.
- You will exercise on a treadmill or stationary bike for a few minutes. This increases the rate of blood flow to your heart muscle. (If you cannot exercise, special medications can be used to increase your heart rate.)
- Speak up when you cannot exercise for even 1 more minute. At this point, the tracer is given to you through the IV.
- After you have received the tracer, you will be positioned on the scanning bed.
- You must lie very still for up to 30 minutes. During this time, a scanning camera will be taking pictures. The images will show where blood flows through your heart muscle.



A scanning camera takes pictures of blood flow through the heart muscle.

Report Any Symptoms

Be sure to tell the doctor if you feel any of the following during the test:

- Chest, arm, or jaw discomfort
- Severe shortness of breath
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Leg cramps or pain

After Your Test

Before going home, ask when you may eat. Also, find out when to resume taking any medications you were told to skip before the test. If you need to return for resting scans, follow any instructions. Most people can go back to their normal routine as soon as all parts of the test are finished.